REMARKS

I. Introduction and Overview

Claims 1-16 and 18-29 were presented for examination. By this amendment, applicants have amended claims 1, 3, 5, 11, 17-19, 23, and 28. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

A brief overview of the described embodiment was presented previously and will not be repeated here.

The amendments have been made mainly for clarity and consistency, and to make the claims more precise.

II. Rejections Over Huang et al.

Claims 1-4, 9, and 10 were rejected as being unpatentable over a patent publication to Huang in combination with a patent to Hickman. The examiner cites particularly paragraphs 9, 28, 29, 32, and 33 from Huang for the primary disclosure. The examiner further rejected claims 5-8, 11, and 17-22 as being unpatentable over Huang and Hickman and further in view of Lappington; claims 12-16 as being unpatentable over Huang and Hickman and further in view of Shoff; and claims 23-29 in view of Huang and Shoff.

Huang includes a system for "high-density interactive voting using a computer network." More specifically, it allows voting, such as in polls, to be tabulated for large numbers of individuals. For example, a system could ask individuals during a television show who the viewers want to vote for, and Huang asserts that its system allows higher numbers of voters in shorter periods of time than typical prior systems. In this case, the voter would have an interface on the television for viewing the voting information, while the votes would be cast from a client computer through a network where the results would be tabulated and then could be displayed.

Huang relates providing live content – it does not provide items of interactive content and then send messages later to cause the previously sent content to be displayed.

The examiner agreed that Huang does not disclose a server-based user interface for controlling the display of content on remote clients during an event, but contends that Hickman

The examiner agreed that Huang does not disclose a server-based user interface for controlling the display of content on remote clients during an event, but contends that Hickman teaches a server-based user interface for controlling the display of content and remote clients during an event, citing column 3, lines 11-20. Hickman actually relates to a cluster computer system that has multiple network accessible computers coupled to a network. Hickman seems to relate to a different type of model for computing, that of a master and slave model in which one device has significant control over the other. In preferred embodiments as described in the application, the approach in the application is less one of a master/slave than it is service provider and service recipient. In these preferred embodiments, the server side files have representations of the content that is to be delivered, while the client files are generated to receive and produce that content in response to time messages coordinated with a broadcast program.

Claim 1 has been further amended to more clearly distinguish from Huang. Claim 1 includes generating client files to be provided to remote users prior to the broadcast event and including interactive components that are responsive to messages provided from a server during the interactive event to cause the remote client to display the previously provided interactive components. The server-based interface generated prior to the broadcast event has representations of interactive components that are to be displayed during the broadcast event and for causing messages to be provided to clients to control the display of content on the remote clients during the event. Huang does not disclose a system that creates such client and server files, and furthermore, Hickman does not disclose such a user interface as claimed.

Even if Huang and Hickman were to be combined, there is no reason to believe that Hickman would create a server-side user interface for showing a group of interactive components for display with an interactive system. Consequently, Huang and Hickman would not have been combined, and even if combined, would not produce the content creator as claimed.

With respect to claim 2, the examiner contends that Huang discloses that the user interface is responsive to the producer for causing messages to be sent from the server to the client to cause previously transmitted client content to be displayed, citing paragraph 9. Paragraph 9 refers to five components that reside on the voting network, and not at the client

side. Each of the items referred to are part of the live event authoring system 205 or the live event vote server 245. Thus it is not seen how claim 2 is disclosed by Huang and/or Hickman.

The other claims dependent on claim 1 and rejected based on Huang and Hickman are similarly allowable for the same reasons as claim 1.

Claims 5-8, 11, and 17-22 were rejected as being unpatentable over Huang and Hickman as applied to claim 1, in view of Lappington. The examiner agrees that Huang does not teach (1) a content creator used to create trivia questions, (ii) that the content creator has fields for designating times during an event when specific content will be displayed, (iii) a user interface with icons representing all the items of content to be displayed during at least a segment of the event providing content to clients before an event, or (iv) that content is provided to clients during an event for immediate display. The examiner contends, however, that in each case these features are disclosed via Lappington, and that it would have been obvious to combine Huang and Lappington in such a manner.

Lappington relates to an interactive television system that includes an authoring system that allows content to be created. This content is reformatted and provided to a vertical blanking interval (VBI) card 20 that allows the content from the authoring system to be combined with the television signal to provide the content on a user's hand held 32. The VBI is a short period of time based on the time needed for a raster gun to reset its position in cathode ray tube (CRT) television. It had been known that information, such as closed captioning, could be transmitted during that time. Relatively small amounts of data are transmitted during the VBI, so in Lappington, the data is transmitted on an ongoing basis.

The sections of Lappington identified by the examiner indicate that Lappington allows a user to create a script of events that will be provided during the broadcast. Lappington appears to have the ability to create a set of "transactions" and an ability to provide a live insertion, but does not appear to have the server-based user interface as claimed. Col. 4, lines 11-44, for example, which is identified by the examiner, does not include a server-side user interface with a representation of trivia questions. In addition, with respect to new dependent claims 28 and 29, Lappington does not (and would not with a VBI approach) allow for content to be provided in advance such that messages are sent in order for the content to be displayed.

Huang is directed primarily to providing polls and questions to large amounts of recipients. To do so, it creates content in an authoring system. Huang does not, however, provide content to a user in advance and that is later responsive to further messages sent from a server in order to display that content with the program, and also does not have the type of user interface described in the application.

As indicated above, neither Huang nor Lappington has the feature of providing content files in advance and responsive to messages from a server, or an authoring tool for providing content files as recited. Consequently, the combination does not include all the features and therefore the cited references do not render these claims unpatentable.

It is also hard to see why one would think to combine Huang with Lappington. Lappington relates to a VBI system for providing small amounts of data over the television channel during the brief VBI. Huang, by contrast, relates to a broad-based system for high density voting.

Claims 12-16 are rejected as being unpatentable over Huang and Hickman as applied to claim 1 in view of Shoff. The examiner agrees that Huang and Hickman do not mention that the content creator includes a first program for allowing a producer to identify types of items with interactive functionality, but contends that Shoff teaches a content creator with a first program for allowing a producer to identify types of items of interactive functionality.

Shoff thus does not provide the features that lacking from claim 1 in Huang and Hickman, and therefore, the combination does not render claim 1 unpatentable.

Moreover, in Shoff, an electronic program guide indicates whether supplemental content is available through a website. The user effectively retrieves the content from the website or it can be provided on a CD-ROM. Shoff does not include a content creator for creating server and client-side files that work together to create a user interface at the server side and files with content at the client side responsive to messages from the server. Shoff also does not appear to be compatible with Huang in its approach. Huang is focused on pushing content created for live insertion from the head end, while Shoff uses content that is pulled by a user from a data base.

Turning to claims 23-29, the examiner agrees that Huang does not expressly disclose an interface with different types of interactive functionality, the system responsive to user inputs for selecting from among a plurality of types of interactive functionality and further responsive to user input for entering content for each of a number of items of interactive functionality, the system further responsive to the selected types of interactive functionality and entered content for creating server based user interface showing representations of each items or content to be displayed during the event.

The examiner cites Shoff at paragraphs 18 and 19 and 32 and 39 for showing the user interface with different types of interactive functionality. What Shoff is referring to, however, is an interface at the client end, not a server-based user interface for user of the authoring system. As indicated, for example, in paragraph 18, Shoff states that "layout instructions prescribe[e] how the supplemental content of the video content program are to appear in relation to one another when displayed on the television or monitor." It is unclear why paragraph 32 is cited, but in paragraph 39, there is a reference to an electronic program guide database to organize programming information and correlate target specifications with the programs. The EPG has a pointer to storage locations, but does not indicate different types of interactive functionality, and it is not stated that the system is responsive to selected types of functionality and entered content for creating a user interface showing a representation of each item of content to be displayed during the event. In addition, with respect to claim 24, it is stated that the representations are icons. Again, the teaching identified by the examiner relates to Figure 8 which is the user view, not a service-side view. With respect to claims 28 and 29, the examiner points mainly to paragraphs 60-64, but the user activates the interactive functionality as opposed to having the server provide messages to cause parts of the content to be displayed.

For at least these reasons, the references do not render claims 23-29 unpatentable.

IV Conclusion

All claims should now be in condition for allowance, and accordingly a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. If there are any remaining issues, the examiner is urged to contact applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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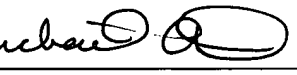

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